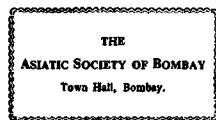


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DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLES.

DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLES:

A SERIES OF SKETCHES OF WILD ANIMALS.

Illustrating their Forms and Natural Attitudes.

BY

ROBERT ARMITAGE STERNDALE,

F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., &c.

AUTHOR OF

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"Natural History of Indian Mammalia," "Seonee; or, Camp Life in the Satpura Range," "The Afghan Knife," &c.

*"All that with potent teeth command the plain,
All that run horrid with erected mane,
Or, proud of stately horns or bristling hair,
At once the forest's ornament or fear."—CLAUDIAN.*

CALCUTTA:

PUBLISHED BY THACKER, SPINK & CO., GOVERNMENT PLACE.

BOMBAY: THACKER & CO., LIMITED. LONDON: W. THACKER & CO.

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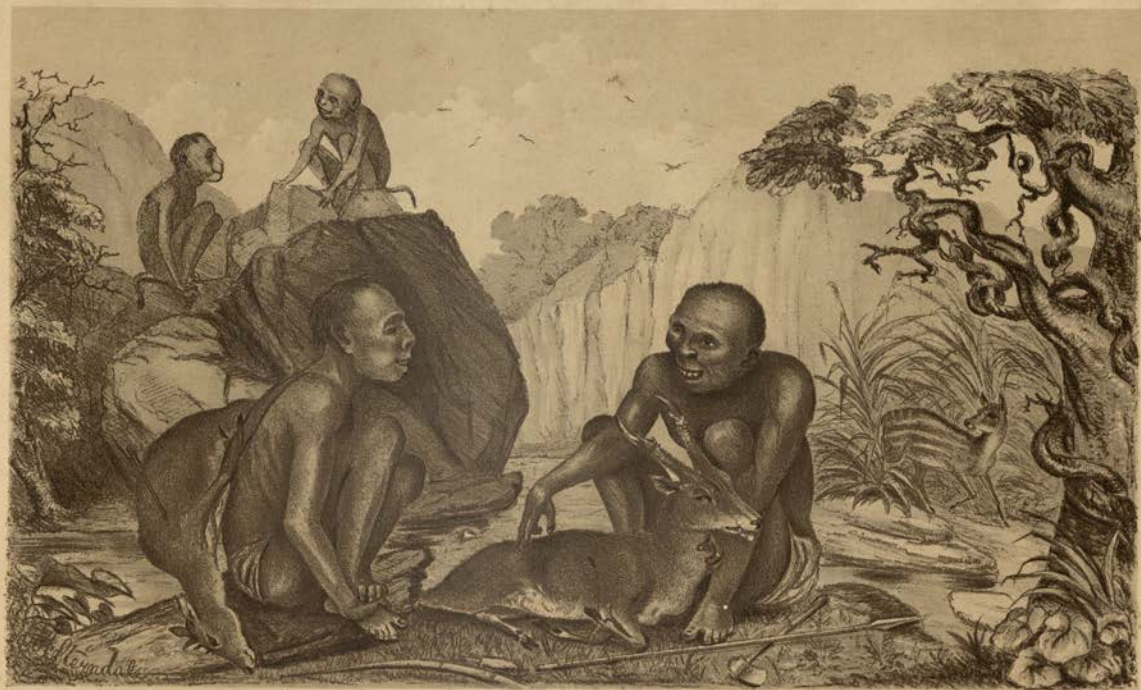
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Aboriginal Sportsmen.

DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLES.



DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLES

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

DENIZENS OF THE JUNGLES.

HOMO RAPENS (?)

*The Gond.*NATIVE NAMES:—*Baiga.*

CERVULUS AUREUS.

*The Rib-faced Deer.**Kakur, Bherki, Hindi.*

TETRACEROS QUADRICORNIS.

*Four-horned Antelope.**Chousingha, Hindi.*

MEMINA INDICA.

*The Indian Deerlet.**Teri Mao, Gondi.*

MACACUS PILEATUS.

*The Bonneted Monkey.**Bunder, Hindi.*

"Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves
Where manners ne'er were preach'd."—SHAKESPEARE.

EVEN the wildest of the Gonds are keen sportsmen; it is a part of their natural training derived from their habits of life. When they cultivate, they cut down the trees on the hill-sides, and letting them dry for a while set fire to them; they turn up the soil loosely, and in the ashes of their huge bonfires they sow their scanty crops of millet and maize. Of course, they have to watch each plot from the time the tender blade shoots forth into life until the perfect ear is formed, for the other denizens of the jungles are their steadfast enemies, and a night's negligence might lead to a loss of at least half the crop. Thus spear and bow and rusty match-lock are brought into play, and many a pot is made glad with flesh meat when a chance shot in the dark is crowned with success. Then they occasionally organize a *battue* on systematic principles, a number of them surrounding a small hill, whilst others watch with bow and spear at certain outlets, and knock over everything that comes past. Anon goes the whizz of a spear or the twang of a bowstring, or away flies an unerring little axe, and small game of all kinds fall a prey. Our friends in the sketch have returned from such a foray and not unsuccessfully. How joyfully one of them fingers the fat little Deer he has got. The Ribface, Barking Deer, or Muntjac is one of the best of jungle animals for the table; the flesh is short and tender like small Welsh mutton, and is especially good when well larded with other fat, not having much of its own. One I have seen in captivity, belonging to a friend, would eat meat greedily. It is generally found alone, seldom even in pairs, inhabiting low hills covered with scrub; it runs in a poky sort of way with its head and neck low, and its hind-quarters being high it has a sneaky sort of gait. It is wonderfully agile in skulking, but has not much chance in the open. Its chief peculiarity lies in the horns, which do not start directly off the frontals, but are supported on bony, hair-covered pedicles $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; the horns themselves are small, 3 to 4 inches,

and very simple in construction, having only a single tine with a basal snag. Both sexes have long canines in the upper jaw, which project considerably beyond the lip.

The Four-horned Antelope is found chiefly in bamboo jungle, and in its habits is not unlike the Rib-faced Deer, being generally found singly or in pairs. It runs in a similar manner with its neck low. The front horns are short, rarely exceeding an inch or an inch and a half, whilst the posterior ones reach four or five inches. General Hardwicke applied the name of *Antelope chikara* to this animal erroneously, as the *chikara* is the Gazelle (miscalled Ravine Deer). The little Deer to the right of the picture is the most beautiful fairy-like little creature, commonly called, from its diminutive size, "The Mouse Deer"; it belongs to a peculiar section of Ruminants termed, by Professor Garrod, DEERLETS (*Tragulidae*), which have certain peculiarities, osseous and intestinal, which differ from other Deer; the bones of their feet, for instance, are more like those of the hog tribe—but this is not the place for a scientific description, so I will pass on to a general description. Fancy a delicate little creature tripping along on the tips of its little hoofs, standing from 8 to 10 inches only at the shoulder, weighing not much more than a Hare, and compare it with its lordly cousin, a Sambar Stag. What a contrast! Between the years 1860 and 1864 I had several of these Deerlets in my collection of living animals. I had also fine specimens of the two largest Deer and Antelope—the Sambar and the Nylgau, and had frequent opportunities of watching and comparing them. The Mouse Deer gets very tame, and can be allowed to run about a house by itself, but it is a delicate little creature and susceptible to changes of climate.

Our Monkey friends, which I have put in as a foil to our sable brethren, belong to Southern India—not the Common Rhesus Monkey or Red Bunder, but the Bonneted Monkey (*Macacus pileatus*).

On the Watch.

BENGAL TIGER.



ON THE WATCH

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE TIGER.

Felis tigris.

NATIVE NAMES—*Bagh, Sher, Hindi; Pulkat, Gondi; Puli, Telugu and Tamil; Wuhag, Mahratti.*

THE Tiger is a large heavy-bodied Cat, much developed in the fore-quarters, with short, close hair of a bright rufous ground tint, varying from every shade of pale yellow ochre to burnt sienna, with black stripes arranged irregularly, and seldom in two individuals alike; the stripes being also irregular in form, from single streaks to loops and broad bands. In some the brows and cheeks are white, and in all the chin, throat, breast, and belly are pure white. All parts, however, whether white or rufous, are equally pervaded by the black stripes. The males have prolonged hairs extending from the ears round the cheeks, forming a ruff, or whiskers as they are sometimes called, although the true whiskers are the labial bristles. The pupil of the tiger's eye is round, and not vertical, as stated by some. The average length is between nine and ten feet, though animals measuring eleven, and very occasionally twelve feet, have been met with.

It is universally acknowledged that there is but one species of Tiger. There are, however, several marked varieties. The distinction between the Central Asian and the Indian Tiger is unmistakable. The coat of the Indian animal is of smooth, short hair; that of the Northern one of a deep furry pelage, of a much richer appearance. Most sportsmen also recognise the difference between the stout, thick-set Tiger of the hilly country and the long-bodied, lankier animal of the grass jungles in the plains. Some will also divide them into (1) the *Lodhia Bagh*, or Game-killing Tiger, retired in his habits, living chiefly among the hills, and retreating readily from man; (2) the *Ontia Bagh*, or Cattle-lifter, usually an older and heavier animal, very fleshy, and indisposed to severe exertion; and (3) the *Adam-Khor*, or Man-eater.

But we may observe that Tigers roam a great deal, and if in their wanderings they come to a suitable locality, with convenience of food and water, they abide there,

provided there be no occupant with a prior claim and sufficient power to dispute the intrusion. We had ample proof of this at Seonee. Close to the station, that is within a short ride, were several groups of hills which commanded the pasture lands of the towns. Many a tiger has been killed there, the place of the slain one being occupied ere long by another. On the other hand, if a Tiger be accommodated with lodgings to his liking, he will stay there for years, roaming a certain radius, but returning to his home; and it is the knowledge of this that so often enables the hunter to compass his destruction. As long, therefore, as there are human habitations, with their usual adjuncts of herds and flocks, within a dozen miles of the jungle Tiger's haunts, so long there will always be the transition from the game-killer to the cattle-lifter and the man-eater.

The Tigress goes with young for about fifteen weeks, and produces from two to five at a birth. When about to bring forth she avoids the male, and hides her young from him. The native shikaris say that the Tiger kills the young ones if he finds them. The mother is a most affectionate parent as a rule, and sometimes exhibits strange fits of jealousy at interference with her young. I heard an instance of this some years ago. Both Tiger and Leopard cubs had been born in the "Queen's Gardens," Delhi, and the mother of the latter shewed no uneasiness at her offspring being handled by strangers as they crept through the bars and strayed about; but one day a Tiger cub having done the same, the Tigress exhibited great restlessness, and, on the little one's return, in a sudden accession of jealous fury, she dashed her paw on it and killed it. I have heard it asserted that Tigresses are the more numerous, and Native Shikaris account for it by saying that the male Tiger kills the cubs of his own sex; but I have not seen anything to justify this assertion, or the fact of there being a preponderance of females. Mr. Sanderson,

however, writes: "Male and female cubs appear to be in about equal proportions. How it is that amongst mature animals Tigresses predominate so markedly I am unable to say."

There has been some controversy about the way in which Tigers kill their prey. I am afraid I cannot speak definitely on the subject, although I have on several occasions seen Tigers kill oxen and ponies. I do not think they have a uniform way of doing it, so much depends upon circumstances; certain it is that they cannot smash the head of a Buffalo with a stroke, as some writers make out, but yet I have known them make strokes at the head, in a running fight, for instance, between a Buffalo and a Tiger—in which the former got off—and in the case of human beings. Of two men killed by the same Tiger, one had his skull fractured by a blow; the other, who was killed as we were endeavouring to drive the Tiger out of the village, was seized by the loins. He died immediately; the man with the fractured skull lingered some hours longer. Another case of a stroke at the head happened once when I had tied out a pony for a Tiger that would not look at cows, over which I had sat for several successive nights. A Tiger and Tigress came out, and the former made a rush at the pony, who met him with such a kick on the nose that he drew back much astonished; the Tigress then dashed at the pony, and I, wishing if possible to save the plucky little animal's life, fired two barrels into her, rolling her over just as she struck at his head, but it was too late, the pony dropped at the blow and died; not from concussion, however, but from loss of blood, for the jugular vein had been cut open as though it had been done with a knife. So much for the head stroke, which is, I may say, exceptional. As a general rule I think the Tiger bears down his victim by sheer weight, and then by some means which I should hesitate to define, although I have seen it, the head is

wrenched back, so as to dislocate the vertebræ. One evening two cows were killed before me. I was going to say the Tiger sprang at one, but correct myself—it is not a spring, but a rush on to the back of the animal; he seldom springs all fours off the ground at once. I have never seen a Tiger get off his hind legs except in bounding over a fallen tree, or in and out of a ravine. In this case he rushed on to the cow and bore it to the ground; there was a violent struggle, and in the dusky light I could not tell whether he used his mouth or paws in wrenching back the head, which went with a crack. The thing was done in a minute, when he sprang once more to his feet, and the second cow was hurled to the ground in like manner. As his back was turned to me I fired somewhat hastily, thinking to save the cow, but only wounded the Tiger, which I lost. Both the cows, however, had their necks completely broken. I cannot now remember the position of the fang-marks in the throat. On another occasion I came across five out of a herd, that had probably been killed by young Tigers; every one had the neck broken.

Mr. Sanderson says that herdsmen have described to him how they have noticed the operation: "Clutching the bullock's forequarters with his paws, one being generally over the shoulder, he seizes the throat in his jaws from underneath and turns it upwards and over, sometimes springing to the far side in doing so, to throw the bullock over and give the wrench which dislocates the neck. This is frequently done so quickly that the Tiger, if timid, is in retreat again almost before the herdsmen can turn round." This account seems reliable. A Tiger may seize by the nape in order to get a temporary purchase, but it would be awkward for him to pull the head back far enough to snap the vertebral column.—*Extracted from "Natural History of Indian Mammalia," by R. A. Sterndale.*

Not so fast asleep as he looks.

THE PANTHER AND ENTELLUS MONKEYS.



III.

NOT SO FAST ASLEEP AS HE LOOKS.

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE PANTHER *and* THE ENTELLUS MONKEY.

Felis pardus.

Semnopithecus entellus.

NATIVE NAME.—

Tendoo.

"The lively, shining Leopard speckled o'er
With many a spot—the beauty of the waste,
And scorning all the taming arts of man."—THOMSON'S SEASONS.

Lungoor.

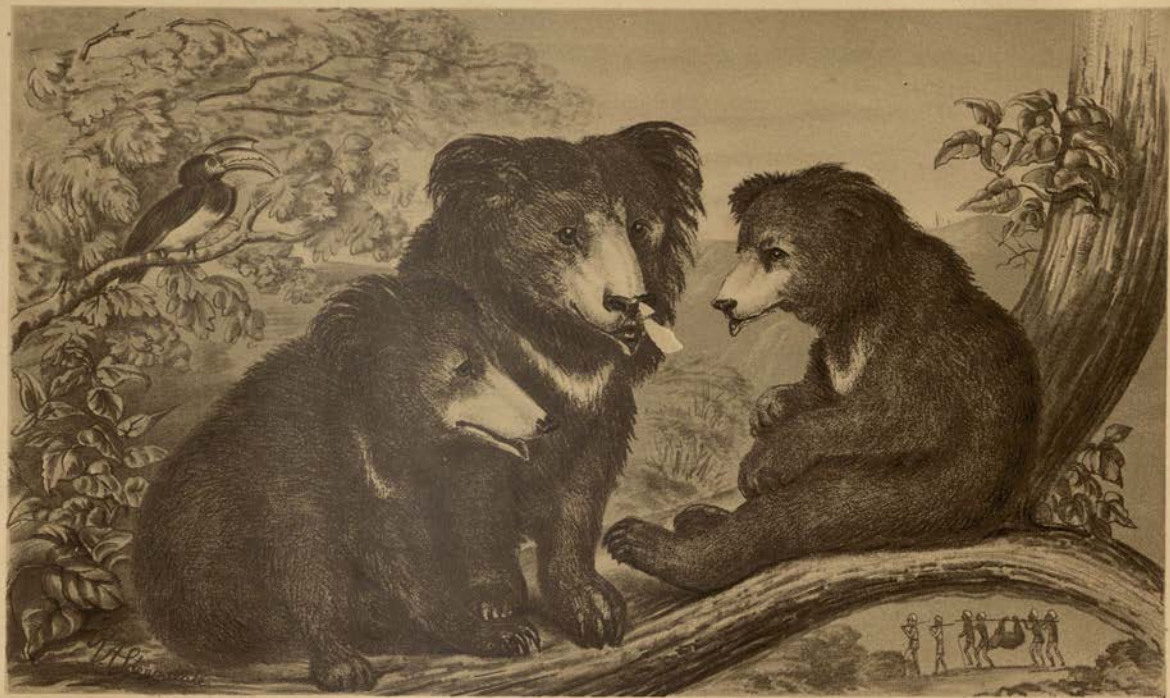
NOT so fast asleep as he looks! This is a little game that our spotted friend often tries, though I doubt his success with the wary Monkeys. Native shikaries have often assured me that he will throw himself down in open ground in the vicinity of Peafowl, and pretend to be dead; the silly birds cannot help drawing near with stealthy pace and outstretched necks, till at last one is within springing distance. Monkeys are, however, more cautious; and, though some are killed occasionally by Panthers, they are crept upon unawares. The Grey Monkey is frequently a good friend to the sportsman in pointing out the whereabouts of the enemy, and in roaming the jungles alone, or in pursuit of Deer. I never disregarded the signs given by these sagacious creatures. There is a peculiar excitement they exhibit at the sight of a beast of prey, otherwise some of those who are nearest to you will bound on to a rock or branch, and there sit grinning and showing a set of white teeth, rivalling those of the Cheshire Cat in "Alice in Wonderland," but will do little more, unless you show yourself decidedly aggressive; but let a Tiger or Leopard pass under their tree, and the whole community begin to jabber, swear, and whoop as they leap from branch to branch, and do not calm down for some time after the foe has passed out of sight.

Regarding the Panther, I can say little in his favor; he is a mean, treacherous, tyrannical bravo; but he is brave, braver than his big cousin, the Tiger. He will boldly enter a house or a trap, which the Tiger will not do, and he will charge like a fiend when wounded and fight to the death. The worst man-eater I ever knew was a Panther, and it is fortunate that Pards seldom take to man-eating as compared with Tigers. This man-eater, to which I allude, devastated a tract of country 18 miles in diameter. Out of one village alone he took forty people within the three years of his

reign, and I have known him to kill three people in one night, as it were out of a spirit of pure mischief. The Natives looked upon him as a demon, and would not go after him. The Government reward was increased tenfold. Many shikaries went after him from the neighbouring cantonment of Jabulpore, but to no avail. I, when my tour of inspection led me into that part of the district, spent several days and nights of search and watch for him, but fruitlessly. It was pitiable, however, to behold the abject terror of all the people, and melancholy at night to hear the cry from house to house in each village: *Jagté ho bhiga!* (are you awake, brother), as half the family kept watch, while the others slept. I had to put all my own servants into a big tent, with a bonfire and sentry with musket and bayonet at each door, whilst I spent the midnight hours watching over a bait, which he was too cunning to take. He was killed at last accidentally by a villager, who, taking him for a pig in the dusk, shot him with a matchlock. Panthers, when young, are very amusing pets, but they are not safe after six months. I would sooner trust a Tiger. I have had both, and one of the latter I had till he was nearly full grown, as he was as tame as a dog, whereas I could never keep a Panther after six months; the blood-thirsty tomper would show itself, if not at human beings, at least at poultry, kids, or any small fry. One cub, which was made over to a friend, when nearly full grown, attacked, and almost killed, a native servant. Another one, belonging to an officer of my acquaintance, carried off and killed a native child. In fact the Leopard cannot change either his spots or his disposition, however gentle he may seem for a time. They are cruel also to each other. I have known two cases of Panthers in confinement being killed and eaten by a stronger comrade.

Waiting for Father.

BLACK BEAR OF THE PLAINS.



WAITING FOR FATHER

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE BLACK BEAR OF THE PLAINS.

Melursus labiatus.

INDIAN NAMES—*Bhalu*, *Reench*, Hindi; *Asol*, Gondi.

WAITING for father indeed! Poor little towsy tykes! If they but looked round they would see him being carried off in the distance, whilst luckily for them, the umbrageous shelter of their tree screens them from the hunter's eye. But they were not destined to escape for long. It was in the month of April, 1864, that K—, a young Artillery Sub., afterwards killed, poor fellow, by a tiger, came up from cantonments to my camp on a month's leave. A brother of mine had already joined me on a visit, thinking the Seonee hills would counteract the enervating influences of the climate of Calcutta. At our second halt we beat up a low rocky hill, and killed a large male Bear, which fell to K—. The Gondts said there was a female with two cubs somewhere about, but we could not find them; they had evidently escaped, and got past the cordon of beaters unnoticed. Next morning early we rode on to a village about ten miles off, where a set of tents had been pitched the previous evening. We had gone about a couple of miles, when K— branched off to explore some rocks, whilst we rode quietly on. We had gone some distance when we heard two shots; but had been some time in camp, and were meditating an attack on

breakfast, when my friend burst in triumphantly dragging after him a snappish, savage, young imp of a cub, rather larger than was pleasant for the vicinity of one's legs, at which he made furious charges, only to be repressed by a smart tap with a stick on the nose. K— had found the mother in a crevice, as he was peering about, and seeing a pair of glaring eyes, and hearing a growl, he rapidly fired, and fortunately for him killed her dead; one of her cubs was killed by a Gond with his axe, the other was captured with some difficulty. The peculiarity of this Bear is its pendent underlip. Its long hair and ungainly appearance caused it in years gone by to be known as the Ursine Sloth, and some people still call it the Sloth Bear, but I need hardly say this was a gross error. This, like most other Asiatic Bears, is chiefly vegetarian in diet, and it is especially fond of the sweet, luscious petals of the Mowha (*Bassia latifolia*) of which in the season, March and April, it eats immoderately; that it sometimes also eats carrion is beyond doubt. When wounded and brought to bay, or in the case of a female with cubs, it is a dangerous antagonist, and I have, on one or two occasions, seen frightful results from a struggle with one of these creatures.

Rival Monarchs.

TIGER AND ELEPHANT.



RIVAL MONARCHS

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co, Calcutta

THE TIGER.

Felis tigris.

NATIVE NAMES.—*Bagh, Sher, Hindi; Pallial, Gondi.*

“The Tiger darting fierce
Impetuous on the prey his glance has doomed.”—THOMSON.

HERE are two animals together, who, in a state of nature, are utterly indifferent to each other, and yet when the one is brought under the subjection of man he becomes a powerful factor in the destruction of the other. I daresay that if a young Elephant Calf strayed away from the protection of its mother, a Tiger would have but little hesitation in appropriating it, but the adults are not even on bowing terms; though if a Tiger were to boldly charge a herd of Elephants with a roar, I am afraid they would go to the rightabout very sharp, for they have but timorous hearts in their big bodies. It is marvellous, therefore, when we come to think of it, that an animal so timid by nature should become so subservient to the will of man as to be made to face the charge of an infuriated Tiger without flinching. That it is the power of the man over the beast I feel sure, for I have seen a good stout-hearted mahout force a new Elephant to face a Tiger, and I have been on a staunch Elephant, proved many times, which bolted at a charge with the Tiger after her, because the Mahout was new to the work, and had never been charged before. However, a Tiger is in a general way a coward also, but differently to the Elephant. The latter has a faint heart, and knows not his own strength; the former knows his power to a fraction, and will shrink from any contest with an equal or superior force if he can possibly avoid it. He will fight if brought to bay, sometimes savagely, but frequently with a rush and a swerve to right or left if met undauntedly, and he will seldom turn to renew a contest. I have only once seen a Tiger charge without provocation. As a rule he will avoid a fight if there be an opening for escape. Some years ago I wrote about this animal as follows:—“Strange though it may seem to the English reader, that a Tiger should have any special character beyond the general one for cruelty and cunning, it is nevertheless a fact that each animal has certain peculiarities of temperament, which are well known in the neighbourhood. They will tell you that such a one is daring and rash; another is cunning, and not to be taken in by any artifice; that one is savage and morose; another is mild and harmless.

and

THE ELEPHANT.

Elephas indicus.

HATHI, Hindi; *Feel*, Persian; *Guj*, Sanserit.

“Nature’s great masterpiece, an Elephant,
The only harmless great thing.”—DOWSE.

“There are few villages in the wilder parts of the Seonee and Mundla districts without an attendant Tiger, which undoubtedly does great damage in the way of destroying cattle, but which avoids the human inhabitants of the place. So accustomed do the people get to their unwelcome visitor, that we have known the boys of a village turn a Tiger out of quarters which were reckoned too close, and pelt him with stones; on one occasion, two of the juvenile assailants were killed by the animal they had approached too near. Herdsmen, in the same way, get callous to the danger of meddling with so dreadful a creature, and frequently rush to the rescue of their cattle when seized. On a certain occasion, one out of a herd of cattle was attacked close to our camp, and rescued single-handed by its owner, who laid his heavy iron-bound staff across the Tiger’s back, and on our rushing out to see what was the matter, we found the man coolly dressing the wounds of his cow, muttering to himself: ‘The robber, the robber! my last cow, and I had five of them!’ He did not seem to think he had done anything wonderful, and seemed rather surprised that we should suppose that he was going to let his last heifer go the way of all the others.

“It is fortunate for these dwellers in the backwoods that but a small percentage of Tigers are man-eaters, perhaps not five per cent., otherwise village after village would be depopulated; as it is, the yearly tale of human lives lost is a heavy one.”

I never got a chance of a shot at an Elephant, and I do not regret it, for I think it is a sin to destroy such a noble animal for no purpose; however, I did at the time regret the only opportunity offered me, for I might have done some service, as I thought; but it was only at an Elephant which had been caught, tamed, and had run wild again after killing its keeper; it then took to destroying the crops in the neighbouring villages, and its owner wanted it shot. I, however, could not undertake it, for at the time the proposal was made I was down with jungle fever, which sent me home on sick leave, and when I returned to the district, I heard that the truant had been recaptured.

Hors de Combat.

INDIAN WILD BOAR AND TIGER.



HORS DE COMBAT

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co, Calcutta.

THE INDIAN WILD BOAR *and* THE TIGER.

Sus indicus. *Felis tigris.*

NATIVE NAMES.—*Soor*, or *Suar*, *Bud Janwar*, Hindi; *Dukar*, *Mahrattii*; *Paddi*, *Gondi*.

Bagh, *Sher*, Hindi; *Pullial*, *Gondi*; *Puli*, *Telugu* and *Tamil*; *Wuhag*, *Mahrattii*.

“His eyeballs glare with fire suffused with blood,
His neck shuts up a thickest thorny wood,
His bristled back a trench impaled appears.”—*DRYDEN*.

SOME people doubt when told that a Wild Boar is a match for a Tiger, and I confess I hardly credited it myself till I came across a case in which a fine young male Tiger was killed by an old Boar. I examined the Tiger whilst it was yet fresh and bleeding, and was surprised at the amount of damage his opponent's tusks had done.

I have no hesitation in awarding the palm for brute courage to the Wild Pig. When fairly roused he never stops to gauge the size of his opponent, but goes for him at once. I had an elephant who had been thus charged, and who would never stand to a Pig, although perfectly staunch with Tigers.

On one occasion I got an old Boar into a net. I had surrounded a small hill with nets in the hope of catching some Barking or Rib-faced Deer alive, and, as ill luck would have it, a Boar dashed into one of them. There was a grand chance for a *Purdhan shikari*, who was in charge of that particular run, and who, armed with a huge-bladed spear, had bragged loud of his prowess on the way from his village. The Pig was fairly entangled for a while, and a well-aimed stroke of the spear would have silenced him for ever and saved after consequences; but the braggart's heart failed him, and throwing down his weapon with a yell, he bolted just as the Pig was making a rent in the net. Hearing the man's screams, I rushed round from my post, thinking a Bear or a Tiger had got hold of him, and saw a sight that was laughable had there not been too much danger to the poor wretch who was flying for dear life with the savage grunts of his pursuer ringing in his ears. Taking a hasty shot at the Boar I missed, and the distance between the two was perceptibly lessened; the

infuriated animal being now close to the man's heels. There was one more chance, and taking a deliberate aim I fired again. The two rolled over each other simultaneously to the shot, but to my relief the man was up first; the Boar was shot through the head, but had still managed to give the faint-hearted shikari a cut on his left shoulder-blade.

The late Brigadier-General McMaster, in his “Notes on Jerdon,” gives a ludicrous account of a Boar charging a Camel, which he knocked over and ripped, the rider narrowly escaping hurt.

A Tiger will generally avoid an old Boar, and confine his attentions to Sows and Squeakers, as the young ones are popularly termed. If they meet they give each a wide berth. What led to the quarrel which terminated so fatally for the Tiger I above mentioned, I cannot say, having only witnessed the sequel to it; but I suspect the Tiger was young and foolish and over-confident in his powers, whereas the Boar was a veteran, and so won the victory. Once in camp I got a deputation from a distant village, begging of me to go and kill a surly solitary Boar, who had taken up his quarters in an isolated hill near their hamlet, and who ravaged their crops at night, attacking every man, woman or child who happened to get in his way. I went there and was fortunate enough to turn out and kill their oppressor, and found that the only other occupant of any note on the premises was a Tiger, who managed to escape. The hill was very small, a mere rock overgrown with scrub jungle, and no doubt the two lodgers would pass on the stairs sometimes, like Box and Cox, and scowl at each other.

A Race for Life.

BLUE BULL AND WILD DOGS.



VII.

A RACE FOR LIFE

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co, Calcutta.

BLUE BULL

*Portax pictus.*NATIVE NAMES—*Nylgao*, i.e., Blue Bull; female, *Nylgai*, *Rox*, or *Rojra*, Hindi.

and

WILD DOGS.

*Cuon rutilans.*Sone kutta, Hindi; *Koleum*, Marhatti; *Buansu*, in the Himalayas.

"The Antelope and Wolf both fierce and fell."—SPENCER.

SMALL chance has any poor beast when a pack of Wild Dogs settles down on his track. Untiring, unrelenting, they follow their quarry till, mangled and exhausted, he falls at their mercy. The largest Deer are torn down, and not even the Tiger dares to dispute the prey with them. On the other hand they have been seen to drive a Tiger off a Sambar he had killed for himself, and to feast on it. I have had most circumstantial accounts given to me by native shikaries of contests between the Wild Dogs and Tigers; how they keep out of reach of his paw, but harass him day and night; but I daresay there was much exaggeration in what they said, and that the dispute was more over some prey belonging to the Tiger than a direct demonstration against himself. It, however, shows the fearless character of the Wild Dog. I have not, however, heard of their ever attacking human beings, although dwellers in jungly districts come frequently across them. They generally hunt in packs, and are dexterous in making flank movements should the Deer swerve to right or left. The young are said to be untameable, and in this respect they differ from the Wolf, the Jackall and the Fox, all of which are easily domesticated and will evince at times great affection.

The Blue Bull is a handsome Antelope, of a type more common in Africa than in India. According to Dr. Jerdon 18½ hands is the maximum height, but I agree with Brigadier-General McMaster that some reach over fourteen hands. He quotes one as nearly 14-2. I had a very fine one in my collection of animals at Seonee which I used to ride, and at times, when in camp, I would make him earn his food by carrying the servants' bundles. The Bull is a stately looking, though somewhat ungainly, animal. He has a mixed look of Horse, Cow, and Antelope; he has a deep neck, high withers, and short sloping back; a short erect mane, and a long tufted tail. In colour he ranges from iron grey to almost dark slate or black, according to age, with a white band across the throat, under which is a long tuft of hair. The female is a tawny light brown or dun; she is hornless, whilst those of the male are short (about 8 to 9 inches) and sharp pointed. They are hardly worth a

sportsman's notice, except to feed a camp of Mussulmans and Gonds. Hindoos will not touch them.

They are very easily stalked and not easily missed, though, if wounded, even badly, they are not easy to recover. The only way in which any fair sport can be got out of them is to run them down on horse-back. A good horse can generally follow where a Bull leads, and if hard pressed they are not difficult to overtake; but if followed only at a hand gallop, they will run for days in a way that no horse could ever do. I found out how easily blown they could be by the gallops I used to give mine round the race course, riding alongside of him and holding him with a halter. Some runs show plenty of excitement. Here is a bit I give as a warning not to get off your horse at the end:—

"I strained every nerve to keep the animal in view, knowing that if he once disappeared in the thicket it would be a great chance if I ever got sight of him again. The crest of the hill was gained, and the pursued showed evident signs of distress. Down we dashed over the precipitous descent on the other side, and were near to the bottom, when suddenly the Bull seemed to sink into the earth, and before I knew what I was about, I found myself on the brink of a deep nullah, with a soft sandy bed, into which we floundered after a drop of what appeared to me about ten feet. Pulling Brownie up from his knees, I drove him up the opposite bank and pressed on. The country became more level and the jungle thinner, and the horse, though much distressed, gained rapidly on the Nylgao, whose purpled flanks and laborous breathing told that his race was nearly over. Suddenly he swerved round and charged. I fired and missed—overshooting the place. I thought I had been fairly doubled, but on wheeling round I found the Bull still standing his ground. Brownie panted so much that I got off for a steadier shot, but as I raised the rifle with the reins hanging loosely over my arm, the horse tossed his head, and the bullet flew wide of the mark. The Bull was lost, but I was not sorry, as he had made such a gallant stand after so severe a struggle for life.

Meaning Mischief.

THE GAUR, INDIAN BISON.



VIII.

MEANING MISCHIEF

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta

109523

THE GAUR *or* INDIAN BISON.

Gavæus gaurus.

NATIVE NAMES.—*Gaur*, or *Gauri-gai*, *Bun-bhanea*, Hindi; *Boda*, or *Bun-boda*, Gondi at Seoni, *Peramaco*, Gondi of the South; *Ban-jarra* at Mandla; *Koolgha*, Dekhani; *Gawig*, Mahratti; *Karkona*, Canarese; *Katugeni*, Tamil.

I THINK most Indian sportsmen will agree with me when I say that there is nothing which approaches to the acme of the noble art of venery than a successful Bison stalk. I do not mean to disparage the skill and endurance of the Ibex-hunter, the patience of him who circumvents a noble Stag, or the courage which drives the Tiger out of his lair to meet him in the open; but, all things considered, I know of no other animal of which the quest calls forth the combined characteristics of the Ibex, the Stag and the Tiger-hunter. Some time ago I described this noble creature in "Seonee" in the following terms:—

"It must not be confounded with the Bison of Europe (*bison urus*), or America (*B. americanus*); it is more properly a Bos or Ox of the genus *Gavæus*, the leading features of which are a large massive head with frontal development, forming a ridge rising above the base of the horns. The horns slightly flattened on one side, very heavy and bent over like a crescent; and it has a dorsal ridge which, rising from a hump over the shoulder, ends abruptly half way down the back.

"In the Gaur the head is broad, the muzzle large, the forehead covered with greyish-brown hair, almost black under the eyes, which have light blue pupils; the girth is enormous, with immensely muscular shoulders and fore-arms, whilst the leg under the knee is wonderfully fine for so heavy an animal; the hoofs are deer-like and pointed; the legs are whitish (from the knee) and give a stockinged look to the animal. Much has been said about the ferocity of the Gaur, but as a rule it is the mildest of creatures, seeking safety in flight. Of course there are exceptions to this rule, but we think they are rare."

The exceptions are generally solitary bulls, for Bison in herds invariably take to flight on being disturbed, and even solitary bulls are not always given to charge, for, on one occasion, I met one face to face without any such demonstration. He simply looked at me and snorted, and then fled precipitately up the hill. A storm was raging at the time, and I was walking along with my head down and coat collars turned up, battered and blinded by pelting rain, when I heard a snort, and on looking up saw my friend about twenty yards off. My rifles were all rolled up in blankets, so he got off unhurt. However, there is something to be said on the other side. A similar thing happened to a friend of mine, but in his case the Bison charged headlong at him; he had just time to slip behind a tree when the enraged brute passed on and caught his

luckless gun-bearer and tossed him in the air. The Bison is purely a hill animal; he seldom leaves his mountainous retreats for open country, unless some very tempting young green crops lure him on to cultivation in the vicinity of his bamboo jungles. On such occasions he sometimes gets shot at by the watchers in the field, but a ball from a Gondi matchlock is seldom fatal in the case of such huge beasts unless at very close quarters. I have known the Pathans of Ashta and other villages on the borders of the Sonawani forest shoot Bison over water during the hot season. There is a little tank at a village called Untra, close into the jungle, which was a favorite resort of Gaur during dry weather. But let us leave such poaching to the natives and his away to the bamboo-clad hills themselves. I give a bit from my journals, which, if it chronicle not a success, will at all events show the reader what he must often expect, for, as every shikari knows, there are more disappointments than victories allotted to each day of travail; but I give this bit as it is one of the first and freshest of my notes on Bison, as well as being a faithful record of one of the hardest days I ever had, the ground traversed from early dawn till 7 p.m. being about 33 miles. Those who have read "Seonee" will remember the account of it in that book:—

"Day was just breaking when I awoke. I dressed hurriedly and went out on the platform in front of the Baiga hut. The loud cry of the Black Cuckoo rang through the forests; the clouds were rolling in heavy masses down in the valleys beneath, hiding the opposite hills from view. There was a steady drizzle, a veritable Scotch mist, and every leaf and branch kept up an incessant drip, drip.

"*'Subhan Allah!'* exclaimed old Wazir Mahommed as he came out and salaamed; 'what rain! all the world has turned to water.'

"*'When will the Bison tracker be here?'* I asked.

"He is here," replied a young Gond as he stepped forward. 'I am Jeythoo.'

"I looked at him with interest, a lithe active savage, spare and wiry, though younger than I expected, but on looking well at him I was satisfied; there was something greyhound-like about him, a snaky suppleness, and a restless sharp eye which augured well for his reputed skill.

"Hastily despatching my early breakfast, we started, leaving the camp in charge of old Wazir Mahommed, who was getting too fat for the hard work we were expected to encounter. We proceeded for some miles over hill and valley without coming on a fresh track, when at last, in a deep *ghela*, the guide pointed to the

THE GAUR or INDIAN BISON.

top of the grass shoots which had here and there been lately cropped. A *Jhola* is a small valley with ground of a swampy nature, in which grow in wild luxuriance the plants that delight in marshy soils; the grass shoots up in broad blades, and marsh creepers entangle the foot at every step. Dark forests shut them in on every side; the air feels close and steamy. Feverish places are they, (and to my wanderings in them I owed a series of attacks of jungle fever which took a long sea voyage to shake off).

"Conspicuously amongst the strange flowers I noticed a species of Orchid called by the natives the *Bun Simgara*, the root of which is used like *salap* (which comes from the *Orchis maculata*), and is part of the forest produce bartered by the wilder Gonds for the cloths and other articles they get from their more civilized brethren, or from the traders of the nearest markets. The other edible products which Providence gives them for the seeking are bamboo shoots, which, when young and tender, form a considerable article of their diet, a small species of *brinjai* (egg-apple, a species of *Solanum*), and a kind of wild yam, of whose *mealy* tubers I have been fain to make a meal sometimes; so the hunter who knows how to find and make use of the gifts of Nature need not starve if, belated and lost, he be compelled to camp out in the forests for a night.

"Jeythoo pointed to the cropped grass and said emphatically—"Boda."

"There was little to catch the eye save here and there a blade of grass nipped off, which was hardly noticeable in the rank growth, but underneath in the marshy soil there were the sharp-pointed imprints of several hoofs.

"Take a hound at fault the Gond hunted about to find the right trail. At last he pitched upon one which we eagerly followed for about a mile, when Jeythoo came to a halt, and said we must go back, so we turned on our tracks, and regaining the *Jhola* struck a fresh line, which seemed to give the guide greater satisfaction, for off he went at a pace which kept me at full stretch for a time. Then he went more carefully with his body bent and forefinger pointed earthwards, as the trail led over gravel beds and rocky ascents; it seemed to me as though by magic, for not a trace could I discern of the passage of the unwieldy animals we were in pursuit of, yet to the eye of the savage the track was as plain as a page of print is to us. The day continued to be gloomy and drizzly, and was to a certain extent cool, which was in my favour, for the fatigue of climbing hills in a hot sun in the month of July would have been excessive. We passed the crest of a hill, and on the slope beyond found unmistakable signs of the immediate vicinity of the herd, which made Jeythoo move with the utmost caution, when suddenly a loud yell rang through the woods.

"Jeythoo stopped short with an impatient exclamation: 'Alas!' said he, 'those wood-cutters have spoilt our sport, that shout was to scare away the Bison. However, come along quick, Sahib, we may do something yet.' Away we set off at a run. Yes, sure enough the beasts had been disturbed; there was the place where they had been lying. Seven of them Jeythoo declared; it was very provoking, and moreover it was hopeless to think of following them that day. A threatening rumble over head announced more rain, and as we were consulting down it came with a regular pour.

"How far is it to camp, Jeythoo?" I asked.

"Ten miles in a straight line," answered the Gond.

"My heart sank, for I was exhausted, and the Lalla (my shikari) gave a groan. We had walked some fifteen or twenty miles, having been on the move since daybreak, and my feet were blistered and weary. For six hours we had been wet, and, save for a hasty cup of tea and a few biscuits, I had eaten nothing since the previous evening. It was now about two o'clock.

"We had better make haste, Maharaj," said the tracker, 'the storm increases, and there are torrents to ford.'

"This I knew from previous experience would be no joke, so staggering on to my feet we toiled on, heavily enough now, as there lacked the previous excitement to spur us in our exertions.

"Several small streams were crossed knee deep, and we had accomplished about five miles of our homeward journey, when a distant booming sound struck upon our ears. This was the great stream on the fording of which depended our getting home that day. Our route lay over a rise, and as we came to the top there was a sight that roused even the apathy of the Gond.

"Wah!" he exclaimed—*isarra poor!* "How will the Sahib cross that?"

"The whole valley was a foaming torrent; the turbid flood tore along the bank sides, bearing away trees, bamboos, and grass, tossing and leaping in its exultant course—now whirling in eddies round a bend, now lashing in headlong fury at some stubborn rock; it would, as the guide said, have been death to try and cross it; an elephant could not have done it.

"The natives sat down in quiet despair. Could we stay there till the waters subsided? The wind howled down the gorge cold and bleak—the very thought of it was fever and ague.

"Come," I said to the tracker, 'let us try some means of getting across.'

"How will the Sahib do it?" he asked with a smile.

"You cannot snap the faggot," I answered, 'but you can break it stick by stick; let us walk along the banks, and cross each torrent that feeds the big one, and at last we shall be able to get over this.'

"True," replied the Gond, 'the Sahib speaks well—come along.'

"The tributary torrents were not in all cases easily forded; many of them were too impetuous to wade with safety, and bridges were made by the agile Gonds who crawled along bamboos on the bank sides till they bent over with their weight, and then seizing the drooping sprays of those on the opposite bank they were drawn down, and lashed together, and behind the barrier thus formed our party struggled across, but it was tedious and weary work. At last we came upon the main stream again. The channel was narrower, but the force of the current was still too great to allow of its being forded, and the only chance was to find a tree on the bank sufficiently large to reach across. At last we found one—an immense *Samul*, whose trunk shot up like a tall mast to a great height before it threw out branches, and closely embracing it was a gigantic *Mahoul* creeper. Here was luck, and we went in at it with a cheer; fortunately for us, the wood of the cotton tree was soft. The ever-ready axes of the Gonds were plied with good will, and the forest resounded with their blows. After severe exertion for a while the top began to quiver, the trunk swayed. 'Stand from under, Hmrah!' Slowly giving at first the noble tree fell with a crash, and by good luck the topmost branches rested on the opposite bank. The tough *Bauhinia* creeper moored the stem firmly in spite of the force of the stream. The nimble-footed Gonds tripped along the trunk and clambered through the branches on to the other side, but I could not trust myself to such gymnastics, and went in up to my neck holding on grimly, though my legs were frequently swept from under me, till at last I reached the opposite side, thankful to be once more on *terra firma*.

"The rain had ceased, and there was even a faint glimmer of the sun as he set behind the distant peak on which my camp was pitched, but it was dark when we got in, and I never felt so grateful before to a native servant as I did to one of my *syces*, who, on seeing our approach, brought down a horse to the foot of the steep hill. Next day I was too foot-sore to stalk, but went out again the day after, when we were more successful."

More than His Match.

BUFFALO AND RHINOCEROS.



IX.

MORE THAN HIS MATCH

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE BUFFALO *and* RHINOCEROS.

Bubalus arni.

Rhinoceros indicus.

NATIVE NAMES.—*Of the Buffalo.*—*Arna Bhyasa, Jangli Bhyasa*, Hindi; *Mung* at Bhagulpore; *Gera elumi*, Gond. *Of the Rhinoceros.*—*Genda, Genra, Gonda*, or *Ganda*, Hindi.

THE wild Buffalo is hardly distinguishable from the tame one, and, in fact, the tame and wild ones mix occasionally when they happen to have common feeding grounds, and I have known cases of the tame ones being tempted away to a life of freedom. They inhabit swampy plains, and never, like the Bison, attempt to climb the mountains. The tracks of the two animals are very dissimilar; in the one, the hoof-print is oval and pointed like that of a Deer; in the other, the Buffalo, a large, straggling round-toed mark is left, which would hardly be covered by a cheese-plate. The late Captain J. Forsyth, the author of the "Highlands of Central India," whose book I illustrated as far as the animals are concerned, tried to ride down a wild Buffalo, and a tussle with a vicious cow forms the subject of one of my sketches. He rode into the herd picking out a bull, but was charged vigorously by this cow, who compelled him to devote his attention to her, and they kept up a running fight for

some time, she charging repeatedly, but his gun was too light for much execution, and he had to wait for a heavy rifle with which he finished her. But this can only be done in open plains, such as the Buffaloes in the Central Provinces frequent. It would not be possible in the swampy high-grassed jungles of Bengal and Assam. The Buffalo when irritated is almost as obstinate and savage as a Pig, but he has one enemy before whom he takes to flight at once, and that is, the Rhinoceros. The great Indian Rhinoceros is found in much the same sort of country, ranging from the Nepal Terai to Bhutan, and is common in Assam and in Cooch Behar territories, and along the Bhutan Doars. It is larger than the Sunderbund animal (*R. sondaicus*), and differs in some respects from it, having the tubercles of the hide uniformly of the same small size and fold or plait of skin crossing the nape in addition to that behind the shoulder-blades.

A Critical Moment.

SPOTTED DEER.



X.

A CRITICAL MOMENT

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE SPOTTED DEER.

Axis maculatus.

NATIVE NAMES.—*Chital*, or *Chitra*, *Jhank* (the male) Hindi; *Chitidah* at Bhagulpore; *Boro-khatiya*, Bengali at Rungpore; *Bariya* in Goreuckpore; *Saraga*, Canarese; *Dupi*, Teluga; *Lupi*, Gondi. (Jerdon.)

"Let me thy vigils keep
'Mongst boughs pavilion'd, where the Deer's swift leap
Startles the wild boe from the foxglove bell."—KEATS.

THE most beautiful of all Indian Deer, if not so majestic as some of the larger ones, and a denizen of the most beautiful parts of the forest, haunting such rivers as the bamboo-feathered banks of the limpid Narbada, or the smaller mountain streams, such as the lovely Hirrie or the impetuous Ban Gunga in the highlands of Seonee. Imagine yourself gliding down the calm reaches of the Narbada some early morning when Nature is at her freshest, when the mists have hardly yet floated off the surface of the clear water, so clear that you can see the fishes glide below you over the pebbly beds that teem with moss-agate, bloodstone and cornelian, ("Narbada pebbles" as they are called, when cut and polished they are sold for a variety of purposes at Jubbulpore); our raft is composed of a couple of rude dug-out canoes with a charpai lashed across; our pilot is a wizened old Dheemur or fisherman, who looks uncommonly like one of the anthropoid apes. The sun is rising over the distant hills, flooding the landscape with light, and making the crimson flowers of the *Butea* blaze out of the dark forest like the burning bush on Horeb. Well is it called "*the flame of the forest*" with its gorgeous masses of orange crimson. Bright birds dart from bank to bank, the kingfisher hovers like a pendant turquoise over the stream from which the rippling eddies break in concentric circles as the mahseer leaps at the dragon fly. The sedge warblers twitter in the bamboo sprays that hang over the water, and the spotted partridge calls from the withered stump on which he is perched. "*Ai Subhan! teri koodrat!*" (Oh Merciful One! Thy beneficence!) is his morning hymn according to my Mahomedan friends, and the idea is a pretty one. Anon the forest rings to the cry of the peacock, and there on a grassy knoll he spreads forth his hundred-eyed tail to the sun and dances to his more sober mates. Our raft glides on, when, rounding a bend, we come on a turf-clad glade studded with dappled dun hides. They spring to their feet motionless for an instant with astonishment. What a lovely sight, and what a noble fellow in the midst, with head erect and huge sweeping antlers and large eyes glistening with excitement. It were a cruel shame to take advantage of him, but the deed is done; the lovely calm is desecrated by a

hasty shot, and the gallant Stag bounds from the bank into the deep pool below. Quickly a rope is thrown round his antlers, and he is dragged ashore, whilst the enermisoned cloud in the clear water floats down to rouse the hungry aligator on the sands below. However, this is a mixture of poetry and poaching. Let my reader by all means cultivate the former, for every true lover of the woods is a poet at heart whether he know it or not. There is, however, little pleasure in looking at a trophy which has been attained by no greater exertion than sitting in an arm-chair. But the days of wary stalking through the bamboo isles of Axis-haunted jungle, Tiger-haunted also, leave a charm of memory behind them which lasts to the end of one's life. I have known the stalker stalked in turn, and was once warned in time by a friendly old Monkey, and on another occasion found a Panther and myself intent on the same Stag. It was at a place called Sirekha at the confluence of the Hirrie and Gunga rivers in the Seonee district. I was out one morning, and came across a herd of about a dozen with one magnificent Stag. Making a considerable detour to leeward I crept up a grassy ravine till within shot, and lay down on the crest of the rise to regain breath. At a little distance from me on my left I noticed what I took to be a stone, but the movement of something black on it attracted my attention again, probably a butterfly or small bird. I always had my eyes open for a specimen, even in the most critical stages of Tiger or Deer-shooting, so disregarding the Stag for a moment, I looked attentively at the stone and found myself staring a fine Panther in the face. The movement that struck me was that of one of his ears, and but for this he might have passed unnoticed, so nearly did his spotted head assimilate with the dry grass and leaves. He too was evidently after the Deer, but on seeing he was discovered, he quietly slipped away before I could get a good shot at him. Numbers of Spotted Deer fall victims to Tigers and Panthers, but many escape through the watchfulness of the sentinel hinds, as in our picture, and occasionally a friendly Entellus Monkey gives a whoop of alarm that sends the herd scudding away for safety.

Hard Hit.

THE SAMBAR.



XI.

HARD HIT

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

THE SAMBAR.

Rusa aristotelis.

NATIVE NAMES.—*Sambar*, or *Sambar*, Hindi; *Ghouse*, or *Gaoj*, in Eastern Bengal; *Jarai*, or *Jerao*, in the Himalayas; *Maha*, in the Terai; *Meru*, *Mahratti*; *Ma-co*, Gondi; *Kadavi*, or *Kadaba*, Canarese; *Kanadi*, Telugu.

———"A poor sequestered Stag,
That from the hunter's aim hath ta'en a hurt."—SHAKESPEARE.

A TRULY noble creature is a fine large Sambar Stag, shaggy-necked and massive-antlered, as he comes leisurely along, unconscious of the lurking hunter and the deadly tube levelled at him—now stopping to cull a tender shoot or tempting berry, or throwing his head back to dash off with his branching antlers an obtrusive fly. Sambar are often driven out of cover and shot; but this is poor work to solitary stalking. Sometimes I have picked one up in a morning stroll without any preconceived plan, and one of the finest I ever killed was got in this way. The following sketch of the incident is given in "Seonee":—

"As they walked up the glen it got gradually narrower, and also rose slightly towards the middle, and at last they found themselves on a saddle back, as it is termed, a watershed being on either side. The wood was denser here, and the trees somewhat larger, and conspicuous among them was a large *Ficus* in fruit, and now thronged with birds of all kinds. Our friends were watching the curious, awkward motions of several large Hornbills, and the eccentric way in which they separated the fruit and tossed it up in the air, catching it with a snap and swallowing it whole; and Fordham was giving Milford some account of

the habits of the creature, how the male plasters up his mate during the incubating season in a hole with mud; and feeds her attentively till she is ready to come out with her brood.

"At this moment they heard a crash in the bushes behind them, and a clatter of loose stones.

"Fordham wheeled sharp round, and, almost at the same moment, as he sighted a break in the wood, he pitched his rifle forward and fired.

"'What is it? what is it?' eagerly demanded Milford, as he heard some large animal vigorously kicking and struggling in the underwood.

"'A Stag,' replied his comrade, 'and, if I mistake not, it is our friend of this morning. I had just time to draw a bead on his shaggy neck. Come along.'

"They ran up the hill, and as they approached it the gallant animal staggered on to his feet, and looked wildly at them, as if he were going to charge. His eye rolled with excitement, the sub-orbital sinus being widely distended; the bristles of his neck stood out and greatly enhanced the fierceness of his appearance. But all this display was but momentary; he fell heavily over and gave vent to some of the most piercing screams that ever shocked the human ear. Milford was horrified and put his hands to his ears. He had no idea such sounds could proceed from the throat of a Deer. Fordham, too, seemed shocked, and motioned to Nusseer Khan to put the poor beast out of his misery. The Pathan sprang forward, and a stroke of his keen knife silenced the poor animal for ever."

Mountain Monarchs.

MARCO POLO'S SHEEP.



XII.

MOUNTAIN MONARCHS

Published by Thacker, Spink & Co, Calcutta.

MARCO POLO'S SHEEP.

Ovis polii.

NATIVE NAME.—*Bass* or *Roosh*.

THIS is the monarch of all the Sheep tribe, a noble animal with erect carriage and enormous wide sweeping horns, inhabiting the lofty snow-clad mountains north of Kashgar and Yarkand. There has been some confusion between this and a similar species, *Ovis Karelini*, but the latter, though an equally majestic animal, has not the huge horns of the *Ovis Polii*. Fancy a ram with horns over six feet in length, which would require a door $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide to allow of his entering! I know of one head of which the measurement of each horn round the curves exceeds six feet, being 73 inches, and four feet from tip to tip; another head of 67 inches is four and a half feet from tip to tip. The entire weight of one of these sheep was estimated by M. Severtzoff to be not less than 16 or 17 poods (576 to 612 lbs.), the head and horns alone weigh over two poods (72 lbs.). He gives the following particulars concerning its habits: "It is not a regular inhabitant of the mountains, but of high-situated hilly plains, where *Festuca*, *Artemisia*, and even *Salsola* form its principal food. It only takes to the mountains for purposes of concealment, avoiding even then the more rocky localities. It keeps to the same localities summer and winter. Its speed is very great, but the difficulty in overtaking wounded specimens may be partly attributed to the distressing effect of the rarefied air upon the horses, which has apparently no effect whatever on the sheep."

Mr. W. Blanford writes of this species as follows: "Mr. Blyth, the original describer of *Ovis Polii*, from its horns, was justified in expecting, from their enormous size, a correspondingly large-bodied animal; but in reality such does not appear to exist. Although the distance between the tips of the horns seems to be generally

about equal to the length of the body; and although the horns are very much larger, but not thicker or equally massive, with those of the *Ovis Ammon* of the Himalayas, the body of the latter seems to be comparatively higher. Still it is possible that the *Ovis Polii* of the Pamir may stand higher than the specimens described, which were obtained from the Tian Shan range."

Captain Trotter, speaking of *Ovis Karelini*, says that these sheep form the chief food of the garrisons of the frontier forts. At Chakmak they saw a large shed piled up to the roof with these animals frozen hard. "For twenty-five miles above

Chakmak the road continues gently ascending along the course of the frozen stream, passing through volcanic rocks to Turgat Bela, a little short of which the nature of the country alters, and the precipitous hills are replaced by gently undulating grassy slopes, abounding with the *Ovis Polii*.* These extensive grassy slopes, somewhat resembling the English downs, are a very curious feature of the country, and not only attract the Kirghiz as grazing grounds for their cattle, but are equally

sought after by the large herds of guljar, in one of which Dr. Stoliczka counted no less than eighty-five.

The Chakmak and Turgat Bela spoken of are the southern slopes of the Tian Shan mountains, which form the boundary between Russia and Eastern Turkestan, separating the provinces of Semiretchinsk and Kashgar. The Turgat pass, about 12,760 feet, lies between the Kashgarian fort of Chakmak and the Russian fort Naryn or Narin.

* This should be *Ovis Karelini*.



Horns of *Ovis Polii*.

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